

## CLAIMS:

What is claimed is:

1. A method of preventing unauthorized recording of electronic media comprising:  
5 activating a compliance mechanism in response to receiving media content at a client system from a content provider providing content in a format compatible with an iTunes<sup>TM</sup> media service, said compliance mechanism coupled to said client system, said client system having a media content presentation application capable of handling said media content operable thereon and coupled to said compliance mechanism;  
10 controlling a data output path carrying said media content of said client system with said compliance mechanism; and  
directing said media content to a custom media device coupled to said compliance mechanism via said data output path, for selectively restricting output of said media content.
- 15 2. The method of Claim 1, wherein said custom media device comprises an iPod<sup>TM</sup>.
3. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:  
restricting said client system to have said custom media device implemented as a default  
media device.  
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4. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:  
interfacing with said iTunes<sup>TM</sup> media service through said media content presentation application that comprises an iTunes<sup>TM</sup> application.
- 25 5. The method of Claim 4, wherein said client system operates a Macintosh<sup>TM</sup> operating system.
6. The method of Claim 4, wherein said client system comprises an iPod<sup>TM</sup>.
- 30 7. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:

interfacing with said iTunes™ media service through said media content presentation application that comprises a Windows compatible iTunes™ application.

5        8. The method of Claim 7, wherein said client system operates a Windows™ operating system.

9. The method of Claim 1 further comprising:  
preventing a recording application coupled to said client system from recording said media content when said recording said media content does not comply with at least one usage  
10 restriction applicable to said media content as applied by said iTunes™ media service.

10. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:  
allowing a recording application coupled to said client system for recording said media content when said recording said media content complies with usage restrictions applicable to  
15 said media content as applied by said iTunes™ media service.

11. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:  
authorizing said client system to receive said media content.

20        12. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:  
accessing an indicator associated with said media content for indicating to said compliance mechanism that a usage restriction is applicable to said media content.

13. The method of Claim 1, further comprising:  
25 altering said compliance mechanism in response to a change in a usage restriction applicable to said media content as applied by said iTunes™ media service, wherein said usage restriction comprises a copyright restriction or licensing agreement applicable to said media content.

30        14. The method of Claim 1 wherein said media content is received from a source coupled to said client system, said source from the group consisting of: a network, an electronic

media device, a media storage device, a media storage device inserted in a media device player, a media player application, and a media recorder application.

15. A method of preventing unauthorized recording of electronic media comprising:  
5 activating a compliance mechanism in response to handling media content at a client system that is operating a Windows<sup>TM</sup> operating system, wherein said content complies with a format compatible with a Windows<sup>TM</sup> compatible iTunes<sup>TM</sup> media service, said compliance mechanism coupled to said client system;

controlling a data output path carrying said media content of said client system with said  
10 compliance mechanism; and

directing said media content to a custom media device coupled to said compliance mechanism via said data output path, for selectively restricting output of said media content..

16. The method of Claim 15, further comprising:  
15 receiving said media content from a content provider providing content in a format compatible with said iTunes<sup>TM</sup> media service

17. The method of Claim 15, further comprising:  
receiving said compliance mechanism in a package that contains said media content; and  
20 installing said compliance mechanism on said client system.

18. The method of Claim 15, wherein said handling said media content further comprises:

interfacing with said Windows<sup>TM</sup> compatible iTunes<sup>TM</sup> media service through a media  
25 content presentation application that comprises a Windows compatible iTunes<sup>TM</sup> application.

19. The method of Claim 15, further comprising:  
preventing a recording application coupled to said client system from recording said media content when said recording said media content does not comply with at least one usage  
30 restriction applicable to said media content as applied by said iTunes<sup>TM</sup> media service.

20. The method of Claim 15, further comprising:

allowing a recording application coupled to said client system for recording said media content when said recording said media content complies with usage restrictions applicable to said media content as applied by said iTunes™ media service.

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21. The method of Claim 15, further comprising:

accessing an watermark associated with said media content for indicating to said compliance mechanism that a usage restriction is applicable to said media content.

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22. A computer system comprising:

a processor; and

a computer readable memory coupled to said processor and containing program instructions that, when executed, implement a method of preventing unauthorized recording of electronic media comprising:

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activating a compliance mechanism in response to receiving media content at a client system from a content provider providing content in a format compatible with an iTunes™ media service, said compliance mechanism coupled to said client system, said client system having a media content presentation application capable of handling said media content operable thereon and coupled to said compliance mechanism;

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controlling a data output path carrying said media content of said computer system with said compliance mechanism; and

directing said media content to a custom media device coupled to said compliance mechanism via said data output path, for selectively restricting output of said media content.

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23. The computer system of Claim 22, wherein said custom media device comprises an iPod™.

24. The computer system of Claim 22, wherein said method further comprises:

restricting said computer system to have said custom media device implemented as a default media device.

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25. The computer system of Claim 22, wherein said method further comprises:  
interfacing with said iTunes<sup>TM</sup> media service through said media content presentation  
application that comprises an iTunes<sup>TM</sup> application.

5           26. The computer system of Claim 25, wherein said computer system operates a  
Macintosh<sup>TM</sup> operating system.

27. The computer system of Claim 25, wherein said computer system comprises an  
iPod<sup>TM</sup>.

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28. The computer system of Claim 22, wherein said method further comprises:  
interfacing with said iTunes<sup>TM</sup> media service through said media content presentation  
application that comprises a Windows compatible iTunes<sup>TM</sup> application.

15           29. The computer system of Claim 28, wherein said computer system operates a  
Windows<sup>TM</sup> operating system.

30. The computer system of Claim 22, wherein said method further comprises:  
preventing a recording application coupled to said computer system from recording said  
20 media content when said recording said media content does not comply with at least one usage  
restriction applicable to said media content as applied by said iTunes<sup>TM</sup> media service.

31. The computer system of Claim 22, wherein said method further comprises:  
allowing a recording application coupled to said computer system for recording said  
25 media content when said recording said media content complies with usage restrictions  
applicable to said media content as applied by said iTunes<sup>TM</sup> media service.

32. The computer system of Claim 22, further comprising:  
authorizing said computer system to receive said media content.

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33. The computer system of Claim 22, further comprising:

accessing an indicator associated with said media content for indicating to said compliance mechanism that a usage restriction is applicable to said media content.

34. The computer system of Claim 22, further comprising:

5        altering said compliance mechanism in response to a change in a usage restriction applicable to said media content as applied by said iTunes<sup>TM</sup> media service, wherein said usage restriction comprises a copyright restriction or licensing agreement applicable to said media content.

10        35. The computer system of Claim 22 wherein said media content is received from a source coupled to said computer system, said source taken from a group consisting of:

a network;

an electronic media device;

a media storage device;

15        a media storage device inserted in a media device player;

a media player application; and

a media recorder application.